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on Atchin, where I had become familiar with many of the problems involved, and was thus primed with a knowledge of the general outlines of Vao culture before ever I set foot on the island. In the second place, I was already known personally to many of the Vao natives who intermarry with Atchin. In the third place, I had the good fortune to meet immediately with a first-class informant, Ma-taru, a man in the prime of life, who had once been a member of a Presbyterian Mission school but had renounced Christianity and had returned to Vao in order to rebuild the fortunes of his family by an intensive prosecution of megalithic ritual. This man was descended from the former inhabitants of the now submerged island of Tolamp which once flourished between Atchin and Vao, who, owing to historical circumstances to be recounted below, hold a privileged position in the cycle of megalithic rites. His information was therefore of the highest value. Not having time to learn the language of Vao, which is different from that of Atchin though the two islands are only three miles apart, my work with him was carried out in pidgin-English supplemented by comparisons with Atchin, which I spoke sufficiently well by that time to serve as a useful check. On matters of tribal history and kinship his information was supplemented by interviews with Pelur, one of the leading men on Vao, whose photograph appears on Plates V and VIII, who knew no pidgin-English and for whom Ma-taru acted as interpreter. Added to this was the fact that I had evolved a highly efficient technique of recording and cross-referencing which was the admiration of the natives, who believed therefore that anything I had once learnt I never forgot.

It had been my original intention to include in this introductory volume only the information thus recorded, together with a survey of Small Island culture as a whole in order to place it in its proper setting. When I had already started preparing this material for publication, however, my attention was called to an account of certain aspects of Vao ritual that had appeared in *Les Missions Catholiques*, a French Mission journal, from the pen of the Rev. Jean Godefroy, S.M., who had succeeded Père Jamond after my visit as Marist priest on Vao. Perusal of this showed it to be of great value, particularly since the aspects of Vao culture that it dealt with were in the main other than those that I had myself investigated. At the same time, where his information coincided with mine he showed such a high degree of accuracy and understanding of the problems that I had every confidence that those parts of his work that I was myself not able to check were equally reliable. It was therefore with the greatest regret that I read, half-way through the serial publication of his work, that Père Godefroy had died from elephantiasis in Vila after a vain trip to Europe to re-establish his health. Nevertheless, being desirous to make my own volume on Vao as complete as

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possible, I wrote to the editor of *Les Missions Catholiques* for permission to translate and include in this work all relevant portions of Père Godefroy's account. This permission was most kindly granted, and I was further referred to the Rev. Eugène Courtais, of the *Missions d'Océanie*, who had himself spent many years in the New Hebrides and who was good enough to send me a revised edition of Père Godefroy's work re-edited by the Rev. Père A. Landès, S.M., that had just appeared in book form under the title *Une tribu tombée de la lune*, the same as that used for Godefroy's original publication, and referring to the native belief that children are begotten by the creator deity Ta-ghar on the moon, whence they descend into their mothers' wombs. The Rev. Eugène Courtais was at the same time good enough to put me in touch with Père Godefroy's brother, Monsieur l'Abbé A. Godefroy, *Aumônier des Servantes du Saint Sacrement* at Angers, who had the generosity to enter into a detailed correspondence with me regarding his brother's work, and to send me copies of letters he had written home containing further information about the natives. He also indicated to me the original text of his brother's account that had appeared, before either of the publications just mentioned, in the *Bulletin trimestriel de l'Association Amicale des anciens élèves*, published by the *Institution Libre de Combrée* at which Père Godefroy had received part of his training. This, he told me, was the only reliable text reproducing word for word what his brother had written. I therefore applied once more for permission to use this text rather than the others as the basis for my translation. This was generously accorded to me by Monsieur l'Abbé Joseph Pinier, *Chanoine Honoraire* and *Supérieur de l'Institution Libre de Combrée*, and in the present volume it is from this text only, and from the letters, that all translations and quotations from Père Jean Godefroy's work have been made. To these reverend gentlemen, all of whom have extended to me the utmost courtesy, I wish here to express my respect and to tender my sincere thanks.

As to Père Godefroy himself, I hope this work will assist in keeping alive the memory of a remarkable man whose devotion to his Mission, which incidentally cost him his life, was equalled by an abundant sense of humour. Coupled with these, he possessed the spirit of a true mystic, which led him, though not actually becoming a member of the Carmelite Order, to practise many of its injunctions, and it was doubtless this quality that gave him the insight he had regarding the spiritual life of the natives. In particular, he is the only white man known to me to have appreciated the character of the megalithic ritual in these islands, despite the great elaboration of its rites and the many other uses to which it has been put, as essentially a "mystery" in the sense in which the Church uses this word. This point of view agrees with my own conclusion that this ritual is comparable with the mysteries of classical

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Maki he instituted was subsequently bought by Tolamp,[1] and from Tolamp transmitted by the usual method of ceremonial purchase to Vao. The story, which has many interesting features, runs as follows:

To-wewe was his father's eldest son and, like many culture-heroes here and elsewhere, had married his sister. This woman was a full sister, being born of the same father and mother as To-wewe, and her name was Lieli. The story relates how these two, having gathered a heap of nuts of the *tawò* tree, sat down together to break them open. Some of these fruits have one kernel, while others have two, divided by a thin skin. Whenever they found a nut with two kernels, they put it aside, till they had collected 100 of them. With these 100 twin-kernels the two intended to perform the Maki sacrifice. For this purpose they placed 100 half-kernels on the Upper Side of the dancing-ground and 100 on the Lower Side (corresponding to the 100 tusked boars now sacrificed on the Upper or men's Side and the 100 pigs of lesser value now sacrificed on the Lower or women's Side).[2] Having done this, they sang the following song, which is still sung on Vao on a number of important ritual occasions:

SONG 1

Sung by To-wewe

(For method of transcribing this and all subsequent songs see footnote.[3])

Slurred
ten
gor gor... le ra e, le ra e, vi a; gor gor... le ra e, le ra e vi . . . . . .
Slurred.
wi-no go na wu-ro wi-na; gor gor... le ra e, le ra e, vi . . . . . .
wi te ma wi te a, go na... win-do-e, gi no ge na wu-re wi-ne.

Falsetto cries: "*O! oi! oi!*"—"*Wa!*" (Repeated twice.)

[1] It was not stated by my informant whether this happened while the island of Tolamp still existed, or whether it occurred after the submergence of the island, when its inhabitants had established themselves on the mainland.

[2] For other cases of the alleged sacrifice of objects other than tusked boars see pp. 452, 579.

[3] **Note on transcription of songs.** Transcription of native songs into European notation is no easy task and can at best be an approximation. I wish here to tender my warmest thanks to Sir Hugh Allen and Dr H. K. Andrews of New College,

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The words are, as those of most ritual songs, either in a special song language with archaic features or else in a foreign dialect, and are therefore obscure.[1] Their general sense, however, embodies the peaceful ideals of the Maki, and means, I was told, "The folk of some places are always fighting; I do not want to fight." The song is repeated twice over, each repetition being followed by loud cries from the dancers, the leader calling out "*O! oi! oi!*" in high falsetto, the last "*oi*" being slurred down the scale, and being replied to by a deep-sounding "*we*" from the others.

Having sung this song, To-wewe and his sister-wife were about to perform the "sacrifice" of the 200 half-kernels of *tawò*. But their father, whose name is unknown, and who was at the time sick in his house, heard them singing, and came out and stopped them, saying, "What are you doing?" And when he perceived what they were about to do, he said, "I see what you are doing. But wait a minute, don't sacrifice them (the *tawò* kernels) yet." Then he sounded the mother-gong,[2] and when all the men of the village had assembled, he said, "You see what these two are doing. They have placed 100 half-kernels at the Upper Side and 100

Oxford, who have kindly assisted me to achieve the nearest possible rendering of the various songs reproduced in this book, a list of which is found on p. xvi. As mentioned on p. 313, the main melody is frequently harmonised by the natives singing in more than one part. As most of my actual recording was, however, done from individual informants, it has not been possible to reproduce these parts except in a few outstanding instances; when, for example, the same native in repeating the same song would vary certain notes, or when two informants would each have their own variations. When plotted out together, however, all these variations were found to be in harmony with one another, and clearly represented what we should speak of as "parts," and are recorded as such in the transcriptions here given.

Since very few of these songs fit in with the regular time beats familiar in European music, no time signatures are attempted, and the very complicated rhythms are indicated as nearly as possible by means of (a) *slurs*, (b) *bars* not taken as time measures but as indicating the end of a phrase both in the music and in the words, (c) *apostrophes* indicating a definite break in the rhythm followed by a fresh "attack," and (d) *stresses* below the stave indicating accented notes. A special feature of these stresses is found in the following notation , consisting of two stressed quavers indicating a sustained note with a subsidiary beat corresponding to that of the dancers' feet. This only occurs in those songs which are accompanied by more or less violent dancing, and replaces the simple crotchet used when the dancers are stationary or in slow-moving procession. In later chapters the *sforzando* marks (stresses) below the tied quavers will be omitted, it being by then understood that the tying of two quavers on a single syllable itself implies some measure of accentuation on the second as well as on the first.

[1] *Wi-no* (*wi-na*, *wi-ne*) appears to be equivalent to the modern *wan*, meaning "go." *Go* is the future first person singular pronoun, meaning "I shall," or "Shall I?" *Na wu-ro* is eqtivalent to the Atchin *na wahal* (Vao *veghal*), meaning "the fight." *Wi-te ma wi-te* means "It is not I," and *go sa win-do-e*, "What shall I do?" The word *gor-gor*, with which the song begins, could be connected with so many words in current Vao speech, such as *ghore*, "to chase" or "to remove a taboo," or *goro*, "to raid," that I hesitate to give any explanation. In view of the Wala version given below, it may possibly refer to the chasing of the aboriginal man-eating tyrant Ias, whose death coincided with the introduction of the stone-platform on Atchin.

[2] See p. 346.